

THE ADVOCATE

December 2008

Spotlight of the Month—Robert Bacon, Case Manager

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, **Robert Bacon** did more than simply deliver baskets to DYRS youth and their families, he traveled to Virginia and spent a week connecting with several youth and their families in Ward 8. Through a recent partnership forged with the Virginia-based non-profit organization called **Tomorrow's Black Men**, Robert spent his personal time coordinating with the organization to register families in the annual 'Giving Thanksgiving' program and the delivery of the Thanksgiving baskets. The baskets included a turkey, vegetables, desserts, and many more food items which helped to make much needed families have a truly 'Happy Thanksgiving' holiday. As a case manager for DYRS in charge of youth in the Ward 8 area, Robert has been with the agency for over a year but has worked in the field of Social Services and Case Management for over 10 years spanning from Washington, D.C., New York, and Florida. His contribution to help our youth and their families is one that we appreciate very much and are glad that employees like Robert help fulfill the needs of DC youth and their families. Thank you Robert for your dedication to DYRS youth and families!



Advising the Obama Administration via ABA Town Hall Meeting Webcast



Two days after the Presidential Election, five youth from the **Oak Hill Youth Center** had the opportunity to share their thoughts at the **American Bar Association** Town Hall Meeting—"A Call to Action on Juvenile Justice." They shared their opinions on a variety of juvenile justice issues with experts in the field and also a fellow advisor to President-Elect Obama, Professor **Charles Ogletree** of **Harvard Law School**. The five young men participated in the Town Hall meeting over a live internet feed from the Oak Hill Youth Center to **Georgetown University's Law School**. They began the Town Hall meeting with relevant information and set an impressive tone which was reflected in statements from other participating organizations.

Thanksgiving Performance at YSC

Sound of Music, School Daze, The Wiz, and High School Musical were some of the selected musical pieces the youth performed for each other on November 14, 2008. **The Voice and Motion Players (VAMP)** routinely rehearsed with the young men and women for their Pre-Thanksgiving show with the theme of "Giving Thanks—As You Like It." Held at the Youth Services Center Gymnasium, the youth were able to experience the theme of giving and displayed what giving meant to them through poetry, song and dance, drums, and a talent showcase. VAMP is one of the many community partners and vendors who works with DYRS to provide therapeutic and alternative programming to our youth. Youth Development Specialists constantly assist and even participate in VAMP's Expressive Art's Therapy workshops with youth by suggesting creative themes or objects for the youth to artistically express.



The Living Tree with Parent Watch



Each year The Living Tree stands in the lobby of the Youth Services Center and in the community room at the Oak Hill Youth Center for all youth, parents, staff, and visitors to express their holiday spirits by placing an ornament on the tree. Parent Watch created The Living Tree to heal the hearts and souls of everyone affected by youth violence, and to also pass words of encouragement to families and children in a spirited manner. From December 21, 2008 through January 1, 2009, all are encouraged to hang creative ornaments with wishes or words from the heart for one another in the community room at the Oak Hill Youth Center and at the Youth Services Center.



Government of the District of Columbia
Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services